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Hardy English Walnuts



Rev. Paul C. Crath standing in front of one of the oldest Carpathian English walnut trees in America. It was grown from a nut which he sent here from the Carpathian Mountains in the spring of 1926. This tree has been taken up and moved three times. Notwithstanding these setbacks, it is a fine thrifty tree; has never shown winter injury, and set over one hundred nuts in the spring of 1937. Under good conditions, it is not uncommon for them to start bearing at six or seven years of age.

JAN 15 1938

Crath Carpathian English Walnuts

★ The English or, more correctly, the Persian walnut has been highly prized since ancient times. It flourishes in southern Europe and on our own Pacific Coast but practically all the many attempts to grow it in our northern and eastern states have failed. The varieties or strains tried here were native to parts of the Old World where the winters are comparatively mild and they were not able to survive our colder and more changeable climate.

★ Quite recently a much hardier strain has been introduced into America by Rev. Paul C. Crath of Toronto, Canada. For about eight years he was engaged in missionary work in the Carpathian Mountain highlands of the Ukraine district of northern Europe where he often had occasion to notice the hardiness of the English walnuts growing in that severe climate. Investigation indicated that this hardy strain represented the survival of the hardiest of stock brought there probably centuries ago from southern Europe or southern Asia. He often saw the peasants selling many hundred pounds of fine nuts from trees growing near their homes. From one tree belonging to Dr. A. Tarnawski of Kosow over thirteen hundred pounds of nuts were gathered in a single year. The trees were long lived. Near the town of Kostopol in Wolhynia there were several estimated to be over three hundred years old. These trees were all seedlings, walnut grafting being unknown to the people of that country, and the nuts from the different trees differed widely in size and quality. From some of the better trees he sent nuts back to America for test planting. Young trees from these nuts are now grow-

ing and proving hardy in many parts of Canada and in Michigan, New Jersey, New York and Wisconsin. Some of these are already beginning to bear nuts. Our own Crath trees near Ithaca, N. Y., over one hundred in number, from seed planted in the spring of 1933, suffered little or no injury during the record cold winter of 1933-34 when practically all the other English walnut trees in New York were killed together with large numbers of peach, plum, cherry and apple trees.

★ One of the most experienced and best qualified judges of hardy nut trees, the late Prof. James A. Neilson, ex-president of the Northern Nut Growers' Association, at one time horticulturist in the Canadian Horticultural Experiment Station in Vineland, Ont., and later Nut Culture Specialist of Michigan State Agricultural College at East Lansing, Mich., had kept close watch of the behavior of these young Carpathian seedlings from the beginning of their introduction. He was so impressed with their hardiness and the excellence of the nuts that were sent over that he urged a thorough search of the Carpathian highlands to locate the best trees and secure seed nuts from them for planting in America. On Oct. 31, 1933, Prof. Neilson wrote Mr. Crath; "I consider the hardy Carpathian trees of great value and it is my impression that you have done something of great economic value to those in the north who desire to grow the English walnut. This strain is hardier than any other strain that I have ever seen and I really think you deserve great credit for your foresight and enterprise."

★ Rev. Mr. Crath had also long been a close observer of nut trees. He is a graduate of two Universities in Europe and one in America and has

a long agricultural background, his father having been head of the government agricultural college in the Ukraine. From his repeated observations of these hardy walnuts in the Carpathians and the behavior of the young trees in America, he felt so thoroughly convinced that here would be a valuable contribution to our horticulture that in the year 1934, with two trained assistants, he spent all his time for many weeks in making a systematic search for the best trees of the region. They located about seventy trees that were considered worthy of propagation. No tree was considered that showed even slight injury from the severe winter of 1928-9, when a good share of the fruit trees there were killed, and even the cows and pigs had to be taken into the peasants huts to keep them from freezing to death, the temperature remaining from 40-45° F. below zero for weeks at a time. From these very hardy trees, selection was based on production of good crops of thin shelled, easily cracked nuts with large kernels of good quality. Seed was saved only from trees growing at some distance from other walnut trees to avoid cross-pollination. He had found that seedlings from such self-pollinated trees usually bore nuts that closely resembled those of the parent tree. Each tree from which nuts were saved was given a number. The nuts from it were planted separately and the seedlings grown from these nuts were given the number of the parent tree. A large share of the seed from these best trees was planted in a nursery which he established near Toronto.

★ Experience with these Carpathian walnut seedlings has shown them to grow rather slowly above the ground for the first two or three years during which time they are establishing a large, strong tap root. After that they grow rapidly. With us, they outgrow

our native black walnut. It is from these trees that the famous Circassian walnut lumber is obtained. The nut and kernel are practically the same as those of the English walnut of California, and in some cases, are even larger and of more pleasing flavor.

★ Even if they did not bear valuable nuts, they would be highly desirable in lawn and landscape planting for their ornamental value alone. The light colored bark and dark green, glossy, almost tropical looking foliage, give beauty and distinction to any setting.

★ Before the Northern Nut Growers' annual convention at the State Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva, N. Y. in September, 1936, Mr. Crath gave a detailed account of unusual interest on his observations of the Carpathian walnuts. He also exhibited nuts from the best varieties. Those who wish may read his complete address in the annual report of the Association for that year.

★ Wishing some point south of the Border where his trees could be distributed without the difficulty and delay occasioned in getting small shipments across, Mr. Crath has asked us to take sole charge of their distribution in the United States. They stand shipment and transplanting readily. We have transplanted over seven hundred with a loss of less than one percent. They may be set out safely either in the fall or in the spring. The trees we have for sale were all grown for the first two years by Mr. Crath and have been transplanted once. They are all from his best stock. Before transplanting, the tops were cut back about two-thirds and the tap roots pruned to increase the development of side roots. Thus the tops are now only about one foot high but the root systems are large and vigorous and the trees will make rapid growth from now on.

PRICES

Regular—three years old—all from carefully selected parents as previously stated \$2.00 each.

Special—A limited number same size and age as the regular grade but from especially outstanding parents, \$3.00 each.

Reduction for quantity lots as follows:

5 trees 5%; 10 trees 10%; 25 trees 15%; 50 trees 20%; 100 trees 25%.

Shipments made by express F.O.B., Ithaca, N. Y. If parcel post shipment preferred please specify.

TERMS—Cash with order, or, if desired, orders will be booked for 10%—balance to be paid before the trees are shipped. Planting instructions accompany each shipment.

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SAMUEL H. GRAHAM
Bostwick Road, Ithaca, N. Y.

Member Northern Nut Growers' Association.

“Plant thou a tree. Its stirring leaves shall sing
Thy thought and deed each fresh recurrent spring.”

